YASNAYA POLYANA

Lev Tolstoi's Home

MOSCOW

TULA

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A Guide to Tolstoi's Home

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The Tolstoi preserve at Yasnaya Polyana includes his home (a commemorative museum), a literary museum, the grave of the great writer, and the Yasnaya Polyana estate with all the buildings, gardens, woods and fields belonging to it.

This *Guide* is a description only of Tolstoi's home.

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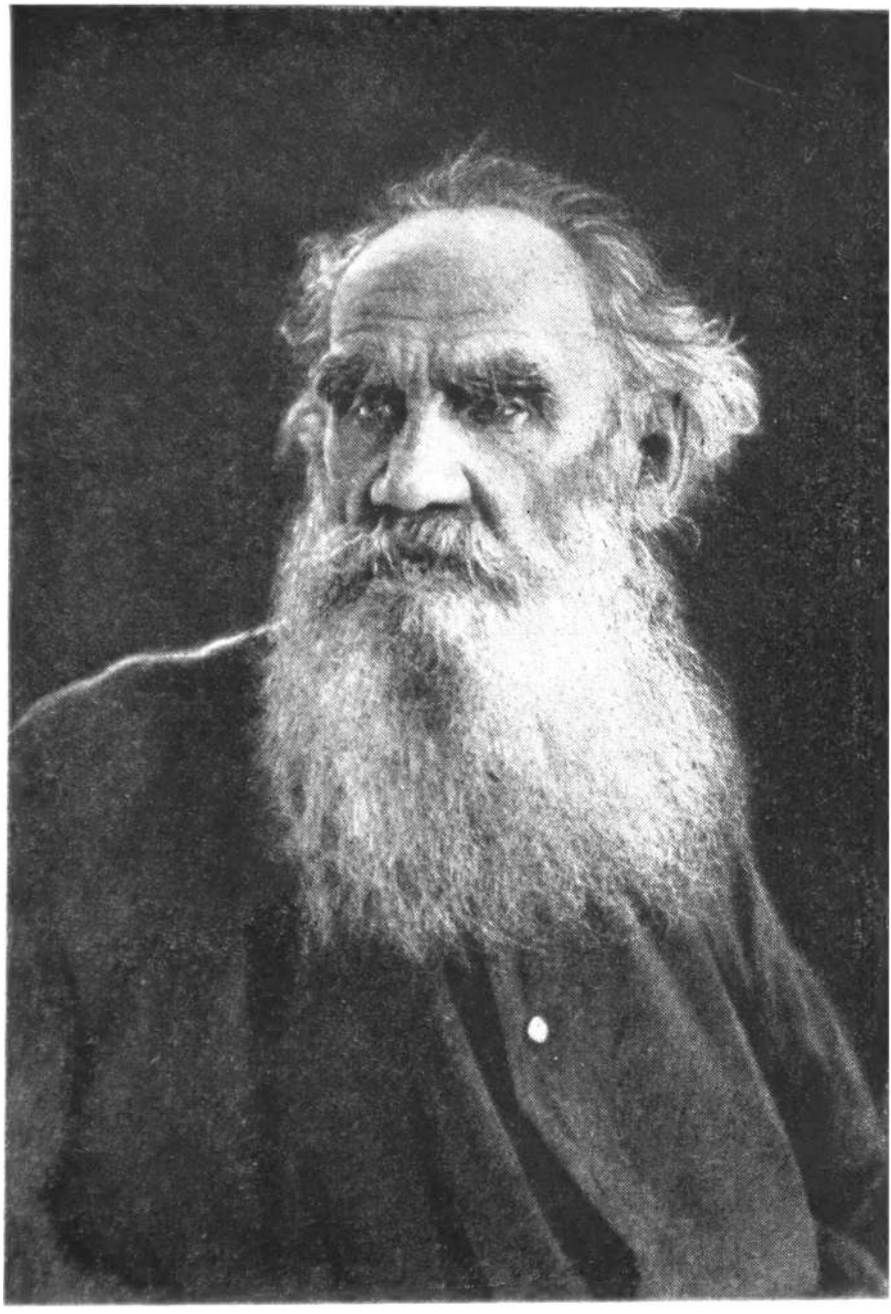

Lev Tolstoi
Photograph by V. G. Chertkov (1906)

EV TOLSTOI lived to a great age and was the witness of many important historical events, in some of which he took an active part. He saw the transition of patriarchal, feudal and serf Russia into a capitalist country.

Tolstoi spent about sixty years on his estate at Yasnaya Polyana, where he conceived and completed the majority of his famous works.

Lenin's brilliant articles on Tolstoi written between 1908-11 give a profound analysis of his outlook and work. In his works of fiction, Tolstoi vividly embodied in all its strength and weakness that epoch during which the first Russian revolution was being prepared.

Of Tolstoi's place in Russian and world literature, Lenin said: "Lev Tolstoi was able to raise so many great problems in his works, was able to rise to such a height of artistic power, that his works occupied a place in the front rank of world fiction. Thanks to the light thrown upon it by Tolstoi's genius, the epoch of the preparation of the revolution in one of the countries that are groaning under the yoke of the feudal landlords presented itself as a step forward in the artistic development of the whole of mankind."*

Yasnaya Polyana keeps fresh the memory of many years of the life and varied creative activities of the great

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* V. I. Lenin, *Articles on Tolstoi*, Moscow 1953, p 16.

writer. It was thence that, as Maxim Gorky said, "a stern and truthful voice was heard exposing evil and the evil-doers; this voice told us almost as much about life in Russia as all the rest of our literature."

The Soviet people regard Lev Tolstoi's home as a precious memorial. Anyone visiting Yasnaya Polyana for the first time is impressed by the simplicity and significance of the house and all the things in it, many of which are mentioned in Tolstoi's works of fiction. This feeling persists on later visits.

Returning from St. Petersburg to Yasnaya Polyana in 1856, Tolstoi settled in the north-eastern wing—one of the two built in the first quarter of the XIX century by N. S. Volkonsky, his maternal grandfather. Architecturally, the wing's exterior was similar to that which has been preserved unchanged and which today houses the Literary Museum. When Tolstoi came to live at Yasnaya Polyana, the manor-house where he was born was no longer part of the estate: it had been sold in 1854.

As his family increased, several annexes were added to the wing at different times. The first of these, on the right side facing *Kliny*, was a wooden unplastered structure.

Sophia Andreyevna Tolstaya, his wife, wrote: "A former tavern was used for the annexe*—a simple hut which, added to the main building, provided us with two rooms facing the garden. One was used by Lev Nikolayevich as his study. There was a white pillar in the middle of the room for no apparent reason, and a spacious terrace was built over the annexe; in summer we dined and passed much of our time there."

It was in the study mentioned by his wife that Tolstoi continued the work on *War and Peace* begun in the vaulted room.

* The hut of the abolished tavern which used to be on the highway not far from the site now occupied by the L. Tolstoi Secondary School was utilized for building the annexe.

Tolstoi's home at Yasnaya Polyana

"When Lev Nikolayevich had finished the hunting scene at the Rostovs'* and I happened to come down to his study in the new annexe, I saw him radiant with happiness. It was clear that he was satisfied with his work, which did not happen often. At the same time work exhausted him, and sometimes while reading to me some passages he would be unable to go on for tears," wrote Tolstaya.

The other room of the annexe was occupied by maid-servants.

In the winter of 1870 Tolstaya asked her husband to build another annexe, and at the end of 1871 a solid brick structure was added to the wing on the left. The work was supervised by Lev Tolstoi himself and Guryev, a Tula architect. In the upper storey of the new annexe was a big "Hall" with six windows on both sides and in the lower —a hall and the lower study or lower library.

"... You will not recognize our house: we have a new annexe and have already been using it since the beginning of the winter," wrote Tolstoi in a letter to Fet on February 20, 1872.

In 1894 the wooden annexe built in 1866 (the one with the terrace on top) became unsafe and was demolished. In the words of Tolstaya, "I decided to build an annexe on the side opposite to the 'Hall' at the request of our unmarried daughters Tanya and Masha."

The work was supervised by a Tula architect and V. A. Bers, Tolstoi's brother-in-law. The new two-storey annexe is symmetrical to that built in 1871. Made of stout pine logs faced in brick, it contains four rooms, two in each storey, and upper and lower passages.

The big glass terrace, familiar to many from numerous photographs, was built in 1892 on the opposite, south-western side.

In summer the terrace became the centre of the family's

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* Characters in the novel *War and Peace*.—*Tr.*

Leo Tolstoi and I. I. Mechnikov in the park
at Yasnaya Polyana

life. Tea and dinner were served there; among the numerous visitors received on the terrace were the writers Korolenko and Chekhov, the biologist Mechnikov, the critic Stasov, the artist Repin, and many others. Tolstoi mentions this terrace in his drama *Light Shining in the Darkness.*

There is in the Literary Museum a shot from a film where we see M. I. Kalinin and S. A. Tolstaya at the tea-table on the terrace. This was in 1919, when Kalinin visited Yasnaya Polyana shortly before the death of the writer's wife. Even during Tolstoi's lifetime the terrace was overgrown with wild vines and some of his contemporaries remember that three "windows" had to be made in the thick green wall.

The balusters of the terrace and of the front porch always attract the attention of visitors: these are thick planks with the figures of horses, boys and cockerels cut out in them.

Outside, the house is plastered and painted white. The floors everywhere are of plain deal and only the "Hall" has a parquet. The iron roof is painted green.

On the north-western side the house is connected by means of an inner door to a narrow annexe of unplastered wood which used to be a pantry. From this stretches a low sharp-edged brick wall with an opening into the yard in the middle.

This is how, step by step, the house in Yasnaya Polyana, called by the Tolstois the "Big House," was built. There it was that Tolstoi spent about sixty years of his life, rich in events and emotional experience. There it was that he created many of his immortal works.

After the Great October Socialist Revolution Yasnaya Polyana, one of the biggest commemorative museums in the world, came under the Soviet Government's special care and attention.

In its Decision of June 10, 1921, the Presidium of the All Russian Central Executive Committee declared Yas-

naya Polyana government property, the house and everything in it to be maintained as it was during the last year of Lev Tolstoi's residence.

To commemorate the centenary of Tolstoi's birth, the whole of the house was made a museum and some of the rooms and exhibits were restored. Tolstoi's library was put in perfect order, all the books registered and a catalogue compiled.

Under the Decision of the Council of People's Commissars of August 27, 1939, all Lev Tolstoi's commemorative museums were put under the supervision of the Institute of World Literature of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Science. Since 1953 they have been under the supervision of the U.S.S.R. Ministry of Culture.

Between 1940 and 1952 all the portraits and statues in the house were restored by the best specialists from Moscow.

On October 29, 1941, Nazi vandals occupied Yasnaya Polyana, sacred to Russians and the whole world.

"And these men, destitute of conscience and honour, these men with the morals of beasts," as J. V. Stalin called them, shamelessly desecrated the memory of Tolstoi and showed, in the words of Molotov, "the abhorrent vandalism of German fascism."

Nazi soldiers and officers were billeted in the museum. They destroyed and stole various exhibits from among those that were not evacuated. Fortunately, the majority of the valuable exhibits, such as Tolstoi's library, writing-table, objects of art, photographs and household effects, had been transferred to Tomsk.

Their hatred of the great Russian people and its culture prompted the Nazis to commit a monstrous atrocity: before abandoning Yasnaya Polyana they attempted to burn Tolstoi's house and set fire to three rooms of the upper storey.

The staff of the Yasnaya Polyana museum performed feats of heroism to quell the flames. Only the rapid

advance of the Soviet Army saved the museum from utter destruction.

In a Note dated January 6, 1942, V. M. Molotov, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, called world attention to the acts of robbery and depredation, and the monstrous atrocities committed by the Nazi occupation troops in the world-famous Yasnaya Polyana.

No sooner had the courageous Soviet Army freed Yasnaya Polyana than the work of restoration and rehabilitation was started at the estate-museum under the difficult conditions of that first war-time winter. Everything was ready by the end of May. An exhibition of objects not taken to Tomsk was assembled and on May 24, 1942, the estate-museum, the precious monument, the pride of humanity, once more threw open its doors to the hundreds of thousands of people from the Soviet Union and all countries of the world anxious to gain an insight into the life and work of the great Russian writer.

After all the exhibits were brought back from Tomsk in May 1945, the entire museum was re-established.

THE ENTRANCE-HALL

Crossing the threshold of the house in Yasnaya Polyana, we see in the entrance-hall yellow bookcases of birch-wood filled with books in many languages on a wide variety of subjects. The house is full of them. This abundance and variety of books indicates Tolstoi's intensive spiritual life and varied interests. Those bearing notes in his own hand are especially valuable.

Between the bookcases and the door leading to the corridor hangs a large black leather bag in which Tolstoi's mail was brought daily from the station of Kozlova Zaseka (now Yasnaya Polyana). It consisted of newspapers, magazines, and numerous letters. In the last year of Tolstoi's life—1910—he received as many as 20-25 letters each day.

The entrance-hall and staircase in the Tolstoj home

In a cupboard beside the stove Tolstoi's sporting-gear is kept. Young Tolstoi was a keen sportsman, and in later years this passion did not desert him. In the words of his son Ilya, "when, taking his walks in spring, he heard the whistling of a woodcock he would stop talking, catch hold of his companion's hand and say: 'Listen, listen, there he is, the woodcock!' "

Tolstoi described hunting and shooting in several of his works of fiction (*Childhood*, *War and Peace*, *Anna Karenina*, *Where There Is a Will There Is a Way*).

In his recollections of Lenin, Maxim Gorky says that once when calling upon Lenin he saw an open volume of *War and Peace* on his table.

" 'Yes, this is Tolstoi. I wanted to reread the hunting scene,' and Lenin, who went on talking about Tolstoi, said:

" 'What a mountain of a man! What a virile power! There's an artist for you, old fellow! And there's another thing that astonishes me about him, you know.... Until this Count appeared we had had no real peasant in literature.'

"Then, looking at me through narrowed eyes, he said: 'Who in Europe can be put beside him?' and answered his own question: 'Nobody!' "*

To the right of the front door is a small room—formerly servants' quarters—and on the left is a staircase leading to the first floor. Upstairs, four doors open on to the landing: the door of the "Hall," of the drawing-room, the library and the attic.

On the landing, one's attention is attracted by the XVIII century grandfather clock in a mahogany case shaped like a turret. It was a family belief that it was bought by N. S. Volkonsky. In addition to the hours, minutes and seconds, the clock also shows the date. It

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* M. Gorky, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXII, Moscow and Leningrad, State Publishers, 1933, pp. 215-16.

goes to this day, striking the hour in a melodious boom. On the landing, too, is the invalid chair ordered for Lev Tolstoi from Moscow when he was very ill in the Crimea (1901-02). When Tolstoi celebrated his eightieth birthday in Yasnaya Polyana (1908) he had to use it again because he had strained the ligaments in his leg.

On the walls are portraits in oil executed by unknown artists of the XVIII-XIX centuries. Over the drawing-room door is a portrait in a moulded gilt frame supposedly of the writer M. M. Kheraskov (1733-1807).

To the left, in an oval frame, is the portrait of General S. F. Golitsyn (1749-1810), a friend of N. S. Volkonsky, while to the right, over a door, is one of A. A. Volkonsky (1784-1832), a cousin of Tolstoi's mother.

THE "HALL"

The door on the right of the landing leads to the largest room in the house which was called the "Hall" when the Tolstois lived there. The family, their guests and visitors to Yasnaya Polyana were wont to gather every day in this room, which also did duty for the dining-room. Here young people played games and danced and the writer spent many an hour in earnest conversations with his visitors.

In the words of the artist Nesterov, "Everything in Yasnaya Polyana centred around Lev Tolstoi. His wonderful personality, his spiritual wealth and great genius enriched everyone who came in touch with him, whether he wanted this or not."

In Tolstoi's lifetime this room resounded to the voices of the writers Turgenev, Fet, Leskov, Chekhov, Korolenko and Gorky, of the artists Repin, Kramskoi, Nesterov and Ghe, of Morozov, a revolutionary Narodnik who had been confined in the Schlisselburg Fortress, and of Mechnikov the biologist; in it the composers Taneyev and Arensky played the piano; it saw many other men of science and

art, public figures, workers, peasants, and students. Here Tolstoi received representatives from different countries of West and East. Heated arguments were held here on the future of Russia, of mankind, on the tasks of Russian culture and art.

And always Tolstoi was the centre of every conversation and argument. Maxim Gorky recalled: "You ought to have seen him speaking to realize the peculiar beauty of his speech, seemingly incorrect, abounding in repetitions and in rustic turns of phrase. His words gained in forcefulness not only from the intonation and facial expression, but also from the changing expression and gleam of his eyes—the most eloquent I have ever seen. Lev Tolstoi's two eyes seemed to have a thousand eyes within them."

On December 30, 1889, Tolstoi's comedy *The Fruits of Education* was acted for the first time in the "Hall." The actors were members of the family, and some friends from Moscow and Tula. The audience included Fet and his wife.

"All this time there is no end of bustle in our house Everybody wanted to stage a play and one of mine was chosen which I started correcting and improved a little. So yesterday it was performed. What fun, what a lot of people, what a lot of money spent! We complacently did just the very thing the comedy set out to ridicule. Masha was a wonderful cook,"* Tolstoi wrote.

Like in all the other rooms, the furnishing in the "Hall" is astonishingly original and simple. Numerous items of everyday use lend this room—like the others—an air of intimacy and comfort. The furniture is neither stylish nor luxurious, as was usually the case in Russian manor houses. There are many objects in the house that had been passed down from generation to generation and had seen

* P. I. Biryukov, *The Biography of L. N. Tolstoi*. Vol. III. State Publishers, Moscow, p. 112.

The "Hall"

many years of service. Side by side with family portraits in massive gilt frames—a usual feature of a manor-house—side by side with XVIII century mirrors in carved frames and mahogany furniture, we see unpretentious bent-wood chairs, tables made by village carpenters and a couch upholstered in oil-cloth.

The family portraits, the mahogany furniture, the inlaid card-tables, the chandeliers and the comfortable old arm-chairs are left over from the now nonexistent Yasnaya Polyana house in which Tolstoi was born and spent his childhood. They were connected in his mind with the memories of old days. As he wrote in *Family Happiness*: "They breathed the pleasant atmosphere of home." Some of these things are mentioned in several earlier works and in Tolstoi's *Memoirs*.

To quote a passage from *Childhood*: "It was already dark when we reached home. Mamma seated herself at the piano, and we children fetched our paper, pencils and paints, and settled ourselves about the round table at our drawing.... I made such a mess of my whole paper with blue paint that I tore it up in vexation, and went to have a nap in the big arm-chair." (Chapter XI.) The round table, the big arm-chair, the mirrors in carved frames with marble pier-tables and other furniture from the old house are still preserved in the museum.

In his last years Tolstoi was especially irritated by the "genteel" way of life at Yasnaya Polyana, but was unable to change it, for his family refused to give up property.

On July 26, 1896, he wrote in his diary. "I scream with pain I am all tangled up, stuck in a mire, cannot do anything and hate myself and my life." The year before he died Tolstoi wrote: "I suffer from this senseless life (more than senseless as it exists together with poverty in the country), a life which I am doomed to endure as best I can." And on a dark, cold autumn night, October 28, 1910, Tolstoi left Yasnaya Polyana for good no longer

able to remain "in the conditions of luxury in which I lived."

The dining-table at which the family and guests gathered every day stands in the "Hall" in its accustomed place. Gusev, Tolstoi's secretary, tells us: "A general conversation was usually held at table, the guests entertaining us with news from Moscow or St. Petersburg." At dinner Tolstaya sat at the head of the table with Lev Tolstoi on her right, in a yellow bent-wood chair with arm-rests.

On his return from a neighbouring village where he had been with Makovitsky, his friend and family doctor, under the impression of the beggarly life of the peasants, Tolstoi wrote: "After this, it seems to me very strange to sit down to dinner for twelve served on silver by two servants, to see roses costing a ruble and a half each, to discuss the superiority of this or that music, the merits and demerits of a speech by a Minister or a Duma member, the painful neuralgia of Count A. and the sorrows of Princess B., the death of my father, or the advantages of high-school education over the institute.... Strange, boring, disgusting and shocking."

In 1908-10 Tolstoi lunched apart from his family, leaving his study for the dining-room soon after two o'clock. Gusev says: "At such times I often happened to see on his face traces of deep concentration. Eating, he quickly masticated his food and in the meantime his eyes were fixed on something far away, as if he were gazing on some object he alone could see....

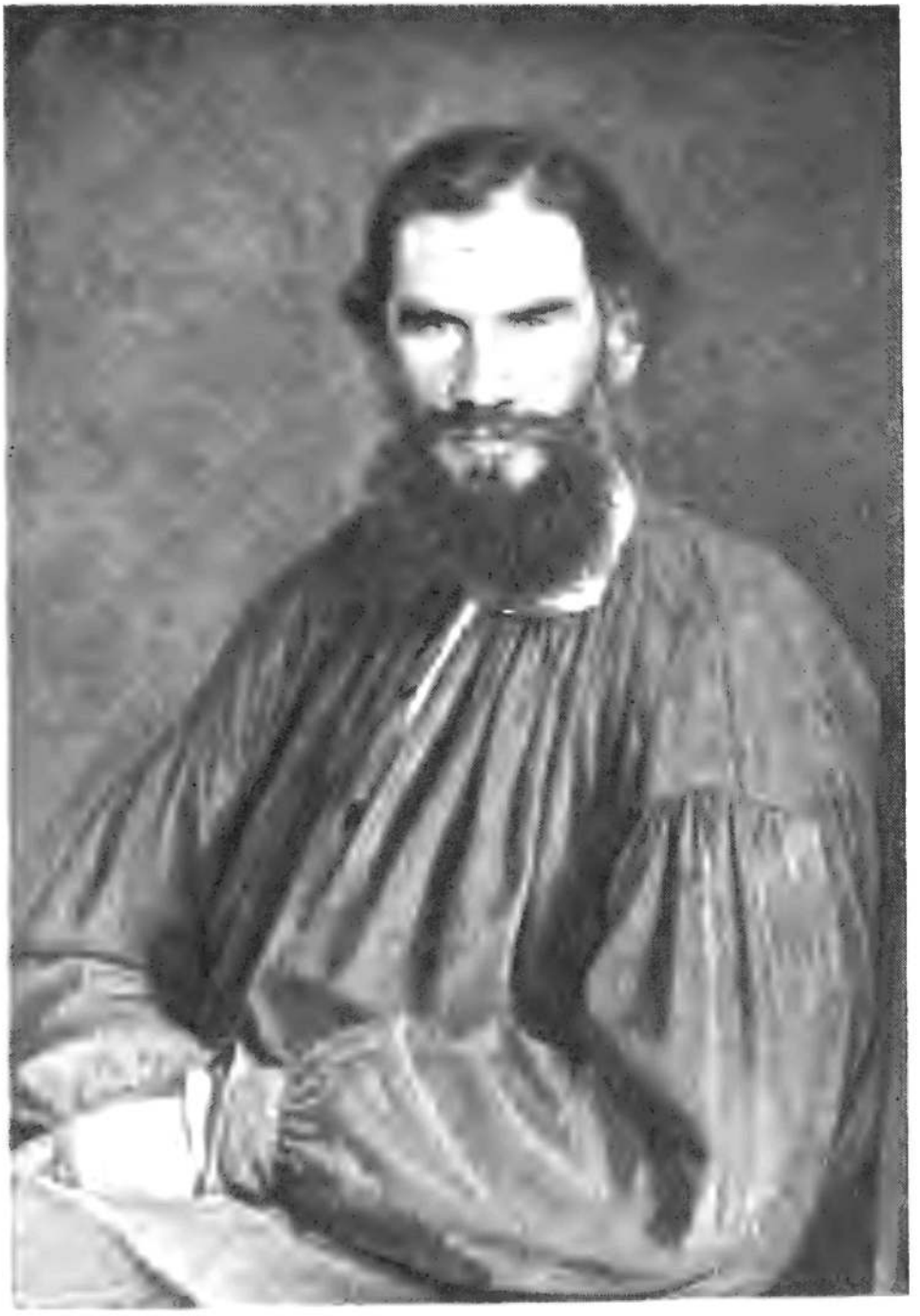
"After a hurried meal and a talk with his visitors, if there were any, Tolstoi went out for a walk or a ride. In the last period of his life Tolstoi would roam all over the clearing riding his favourite Delir, but without dog or gun, as before, communing with Nature while he thought over his works of fiction, articles, letters or various particular problems. Now and then, remaining in the saddle and sometimes not stopping his horse, he

would take his note-book out of his pocket and jot down the ideas and images that appeared before his mind's eye."

In the left-hand corner of the "Hall" are a round mahogany table, a sofa and several easy chairs. On the table there is a lamp with a large pleated paper shade. The members of the family and guests would gather in this pleasant corner in the evenings, chatting quietly or listening to Tolstoi's or somebody else's reading, the women sewing or knitting. It is exactly such a scene as this that is portrayed in Pasternak's picture *Lev Tolstoi among His Family*. This picture, like the reminiscences of Sergeyenko, shows the comfortable life of the Tolstois. "Dusk was falling. Candles were brought and put on the tea-table. A lamp with a shade was put on the other table—the round one in the corner. Sophia Andreyevna put the snapshots, she had taken during the day and printed herself, out to dry. Then she took her sewing and sat down at the round table, bending low over her work. The large room with the black squares of old portraits was plunged in semidarkness.

It was here that in 1895 Tolstoi read his as yet unfinished *Resurrection* to a small group of friends. The composer Taneyev who was then living at Yasnaya Polyana made a detailed entry in his diary about this: "On August 6 and 7 Lev Nikolayevich read to us his new novel *Resurrection*. It began on Sunday, the 6th, at 8 o'clock in the evening, after supper, and lasted till one o'clock in the morning. Tolstoi read in a voice low with excitement; now and then he passed the manuscript to Tatiana, his daughter, to read. On the first night we heard up to the end of the court-room scene. After the reading, at meal and after it, a heated argument started."

In the opposite corner of the room there are some yellow bent-wood arm-chairs, two sofas, like the one in the first corner, and another round table. This was the Young



Lev Tolstoi
Portrait in oils by I. N. Kramskoi (1873)

People's Corner. Laughter, jokes, the sounds of the balalaika or mandoline were often heard here. Tolstoi "was fond of joking and laughing, he liked harmless funny stories and he himself laughed softly and irresistibly."

Tolstoi liked playing chess in the evening—it was a relaxation from his constant mental concentration. Chess remained his favourite game in his old age. In this room Tolstoi played chess with Turgenev, Urusov, Sukhotin, Tanеyev, Goldenweiser, and many other friends.

As you enter the "Hall" you are faced with portraits of Tolstoi and members of his family, painted by outstanding Russian artists of the XIX and XX centuries.

The portrait of Tolstoi done by I. N. Kramskoi in 1873, when Tolstoi was writing *Anna Karenina*, is the writer's first likeness in oils and is considered one of the best.

"For over a fortnight I have been sitting for the artist Kramskoi, who is painting my picture for the Tretyakov Gallery. I consented to this, because Kramskoi came down himself; he agreed to paint another portrait at a very low price for ourselves, and my wife persuaded me to sit," Tolstoi wrote to the poet Fet on September 25, 1873.

Tolstoi's wife wrote to her sister: "...Kramskoi is painting two portraits in oils of my husband. This time it was the artist who persuaded him and he agreed to have his second portrait done; it will remain in our possession and will cost about 250 rubles. The work is in progress on both pictures and they are so much like him that one is afraid to look at them."*

Of these portraits of the author of *War and Peace*, Stasov, the well-known art critic, wrote: "Both his (Kramskoi's – *V. P.*) portraits of Tolstoi are real master

* P. I. Biryukov. *The Biography of L. N. Tolstoi*. Vol. II. State Publishers. Moscow, p. 115.

Lev Tolstoi and I. Y. Repin in the "Hall" of the Yasnaya Polyana house

pieces, priceless portrayals of the great Russian writer in his mature years. Talent, wisdom, original personality, unbending will-power and simplicity are convincingly revealed in the face and pose of this splendid portrait."*

The two portraits to the right of the one by Kramskoi are by his pupil, the great Russian artist Repin.

Repin painted Tolstoi's portrait in 1887 and it began the artist's brilliant series of portraits and drawings executed during the long years of his friendship with the great writer. In this unfinished portrait, Tolstoi is depicted at his writing-table in his lower study.

In 1887 Tolstoi wrote to Chertkov: "Tomorrow Repin will have been a week with us: he paints my portrait and takes up my time, but I am glad all the same and I've grown very fond of him."**

Tolstoi's wife wrote in her diary: "The artist Repin stayed with us; he came on the 9th and left on the night of the 16th. He did two portraits of Lev Nikolayevich. He began the first one in the lower study, but did not like it and started another one in the 'Hall' upstairs, against a light background. That is a wonderful portrait; we keep it while it is drying. He finished the first portrait in a hurry and made me a present of it."

We know that Repin was dissatisfied with the portrait, saying: "There's no atmosphere and the perspective is all wrong." But Sergei, Tolstoi's son, says, "the eyes in this portrait, the acute small grey eyes of Lev Nikolayevich, are portrayed better than in any other portrait of Tolstoi, whether by Repin himself or by anybody else."

The centre of the wall is occupied by an excellent large portrait of Tolstoi's eldest daughter Tatiana who married M. S. Sukhotin. This, too, was done by Repin in 1893.

"I asked Repin," wrote Tolstoi's wife, "to paint a

* V. V. Stasov, *I. N. Kramskoi*, St. Petersburg, 1887, p. 19.
** Lev Tolstoi, *Complete Works*, Vol. 86, p. 74.

Tatiana Tolstaya
Portrait in oils by I. Y. Repin (1893)

portrait of my daughter Tanya. Repin agreed at once—he was very fond of our Tanya and held her in very high esteem. At first I liked the portrait—simply as a picture, for there was little likeness. But later, the likeness came and I like it very much. I remember Repin was in a great hurry to go to St. Petersburg . . . and he could not finish doing the hands. So they remain mere sketches."

The portrait was done from life at Tolstoi's house in Khamovniki, Moscow, but since 1894 has been kept at Yasnaya Polyana. It has twice been exhibited: at Tavrichesky Palace, St. Petersburg (1905), and at a Repin exhibition held in Moscow and Leningrad (1936-37). Tatiana studied painting under Repin and at the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture. She painted several portraits of her father, some relatives, friends and Yasnaya Polyana peasants.

Near the window (on the left) is a portrait of Tolstoi's daughter Maria, who married Obolensky. This is the work of Ghe, done in 1891.

Of it Tolstoi's daughter Tatiana wrote: "Once in his (Ghe's—*N. P.*) presence I began a portrait of my sister Maria, so as to have the benefit of his advice. After I had done the rough sketch, Ghe came up, looked at it and did not approve of my work. 'Oh, Tanya, how can you paint like this! This is how to do it!' He took from me my palette and several large brushes and made practically a new sketch. Then he handed me back the palette and bade me go on. But the sketch was so good that we begged him to finish the portrait, and he did so."

On the same wall (to the right of the window) is a portrait of Sophia Andreyevna, by Serov (1892). The manner in which the portrait is executed is not typical of Serov in the early nineties. Tolstoi asked the artist to paint his wife's portrait at the time they lived in Moscow. Their acquaintances and, as Sergei Tolstoi told the present author, Lev Tolstoi himself considered the portrait a good likeness.

Tolstoi's wife
Portrait in oils by V. A. Serov (1892)

The family portraits in oils on the opposite wall are by unknown artists. They remind us of the various periods in the history of the family, the history of the Yasnaya Polyana estate and the reflection of the family chronicle in Tolstoi's works of fiction.

Left of the door is the portrait of Infantry General N. S. Volkonsky (1753-1821), Tolstoi's maternal grandfather. "A clever, proud and gifted man," as Tolstoi described him, Volkonsky had a versatile mind, an independent nature and held independent opinions. He ordered a park to be laid and ponds dug on his estate; he it was who constructed the main buildings that are used to this day. Tolstoi endowed Prince Nikolai Andreyevich Bolkonsky in his *War and Peace* with some biographical incidents and characteristics of Volkonsky. The very appearance of the old prince as sketched in a rough draft of *War and Peace* reminds one of the writer's grandfather. "The prince was well preserved for his age, his hair was powdered, his chin, clean-shaven, seemed blue.... He held himself upright, carried his head high, and his black eyes looked proudly and calmly from beneath his bushy black eyebrows; he had a thin beaked nose and thin lips pressed tight."*

On the same wall, in a big gilt frame, is the portrait of Second-Major Prince Nikolai Ivanovich Gorchakov (1725-1811), Tolstoi's great-grandfather.

According to materials preserved, Tolstoi at the end of 1878 contemplated writing a novel the action of which was to take place in the XVIII century. The main characters were to be Tolstoi's forebears—the Princes Gorchakov. In his *Reminiscences* and the unfinished story *The Weary and the Toiling*, Tolstoi mentions his great-grandfather N. I. Gorchakov, some events of his life, his riches and his avarice.

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* L. Tolstoi. *Complete Works of Fiction*. Vol. VII. Moscow and Leningrad, State Publishers, 1930, p. 318

I. A. Tolstoi
Portrait in oils by unknown artist

N. S. Volkonsky
Portrait in oils by unknown artist

To the left of the door leading to the drawing-room is the portrait of Brigadier and Privy Councillor I. A. Tolstoi (1757-1820), the writer's paternal grandfather who was married to the daughter of N. I. Gorchakov, Pelageya Nikolayevna. Tolstoi wrote about his grandfather in the following words: "As far as I could judge, he was a narrow-minded, easy-going man, merry and not merely generous but spendthrift, and exceedingly trustful."*

When Moscow was occupied by the French, I. A. Tolstoi lost his house and all his movable property which he valued at 200,000 rubles. Ilya Andreyevich Rostov in *War and Peace* is drawn from I. A. Tolstoi.

The oldest portrait in the gallery of Tolstoi's ancestors is that of Aksinya Gavrilovna Mortkina, the grandmother of N. I. Gorchakov. She is depicted in the black apparel of a nun with a rosary in her hand. Before the portrait was restored one could see the date—1705.

Near the window to the right is the portrait of Volkonsky's wife Yekaterina Dmitrievna Volkonskaya (1749-1792), née Trubetskaya, Tolstoi's grandmother. Tolstoi said in his *Reminiscences*: "Princess Yekaterina Dmitrievna died early and left behind her an only daughter Maria." The Tolstois believed that this portrait was by Rokotov.

There are in the "Hall" sculptures of Lev Tolstoi by Ghe (1890), Repin (1891), and a bust of Sophia Andreyevna by L. L. Tolstoi (1910). On the left pier-table is one of the best sculptures of Tolstoi—the half-length plaster portrait with arms crossed on the chest, by Trubetskoi (1899).

The two pianos in the "Hall" (a small one and a concert grand, both by Becker) are eloquent testimony to the important part music played in the life of Tolstoi and his family.

Sergei Tolstoi wrote: "Never in my life have I met anyone who felt music so deeply as did my father."

* Lev Tolstoi, *Complete Works*, Vol. 34, p. 350

All his life Tolstoi loved classical music and Russian folk songs and dances. In his last years he said: "I love nothing so much as our simple country songs."

"In his family," Sergei Tolstoi wrote, "Lev Nikolayevich encouraged the singing of folk songs. He would often say: 'I'd like to hear you sing or play something.' His daughters Tatiana and Maria sang songs of Yasnaya Polyana country women and also gypsy songs."

Tolstoi was a connoisseur of folklore and made it his study. In Tolstoi's works, such as *War and Peace, Anna Karenina, The Snow Storm, The Idyll, Family Happiness,* and others, the songs of the Russian people—the expression of the breadth and strength of the Russian national character—occupy an important place. In "What is Art?" Tolstoi writes: "The other day I was returning from a walk in very low spirits. As I came nearer home I heard a large chorus of country women. Their singing, accompanied by shouts and the swishing of the scythe, expressed so much joy, vigour and energy that, unnoticeably, I became infected with their mood, went at a brisker pace and came home refreshed and merry. Everybody at home, too, had heard this singing and was in similar mood."*

Sergei Tolstoi recalls that: "In the seventies Tolstoi was so taken up with music that he played three or four hours every day. The memory of his playing is among the most powerful impressions of my childhood. When we children had gone to bed my father sat at the piano and played till twelve or one in the morning. Sometimes he played duets with my mother."

When, in the evening, all the members of the family and guests were gathered in the "Hall," they usually played and sang. Tolstoi often accompanied the singing of his children on the piano, and particularly that of T. A. Kuzminskaya, his sister-in-law, who sang beautiful

* L. Tolstoi. "What Is Art?", Moscow 1911, p. 305.

songs by Glinka, Dargomyzhsky and Chaikovsky. Among visitors of Yasnaya Polyana were many musicians Taneyev, Arensky, Wanda Landowska, Olenina-d'Alheim, Goldenweiser, Igumnov, Erdenko.

Tolstoi liked listening to music while sitting in a deep arm-chair standing close to the piano near the door to the drawing-room.

Goldenweiser tells us that: "When somebody played he (Tolstoi.—*N.P.*) usually sat in an old arm-chair, low and wide, which was upholstered in some cheap stuff and was put at the end of the piano."*

We see Tolstoi in this chair in Repin's drawing of 1887 entitled "Tolstoi in Grandfather's Arm-Chair," and in the portrait done in 1909, during the artist's last visit to Yasnaya Polyana.

On the shelves in the corner are numerous music books, including Glinka, Rubinstein, Balakirev, Haydn, Mozart, Chopin and other favourite composers.

Beside the piano, on the table, is an album of drawings bound in brown leather with a silver inscription reading "August 28, 1908. To Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoi, the great writer of the Russian land, from the Moscow Society of Art Lovers." It contains drawings in water-colours and crayons by Kasatkin, A. Vasnetsov, Baturin, Pasternak, and others.

THE DRAWING-ROOM

From the "Hall" you go to a small room with two windows on the southern side—the drawing-room. Here for many years lived Tatiana Alexandrovna Yergolskaya (1792-1874),** a distant relation of Tolstoi's, whom he

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* A. B. Goldenweiser, *Tolstoi and Music*. Literary Heritage. Vol. 37-38, p. 593.

** There is no picture of T. A. Yergolskaya, as there is none of Tolstoi's mother, with the exception of the latter's silhouette as a little girl.

called "Auntie" and loved dearly. In Tolstoi's own words she was "the third, after my father and my mother, person to influence me." Yergolskaya was not married and devoted all her life to the upbringing of Lev Tolstoi and his brothers and sister, left parentless at an early age.

In speaking of his life at Yasnaya Polyana before he married, Tolstoi gave the following description of this room at the time his "Auntie" lived there: "This is what her room was like: in the left corner was a chiffonier containing numberless objects precious in her eyes; in the right corner an icon-case with icons and a big icon of the Saviour in a silver setting; in the middle was the sofa which served as her bed; before it, a table. On the right was the door to her maid's room. Under a mirror between the windows was her small writing-table with all kinds of jars and vases in which she kept gingerbread and dates she liked to treat me to. Near one of the windows were two chairs and to the right of the door an easy chair with embroidered cushions, in which she liked me to sit. I spent many an evening in that chair."*

Tolstoi spent long autumn and winter evenings at his "Auntie's." "These evenings have remained a pleasant memory with me. I owe my best thoughts and impulses to these evenings."**

The room as it was in Yergolskaya's lifetime is described in Tolstoi's *Family Happiness* as the room of Tatiana Semenovna. Yergolskaya's personality and life as a young girl are described in *War and Peace* (Sonya). She, too, is the prototype of Nekhlyudov's aunt in *The Romance of a Russian Landlord* and in *The Morning of a Landlord.*

After 1874 this room became the drawing-room and Tolstoi's wife spent much of her time in it. In the corner at a window, right of the door, was her small mahogany

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* Lev Tolstoi, *Complete Works*, Vol. 34, p. 367

** *Ibid.*, p. 367.

writing-desk at which she usually copied her husband's works. Today this writing-desk is in the Tolstoi museum in Moscow and its place is occupied by an ornamented writing-table in the Russian style.

For nearly 48 years of their married life, Tolstoi's wife was his closest assistant in his great creative work. It is well known that Tolstoi made exacting demands upon himself and his work, always striving to give the clearest and most convincing expression to his ideas. In the process of work he would change not only words, expressions, the order of the chapters and the composition, he would change the general outline, as in the case of *War and Peace* and some other works.

Tolstoi's rough drafts were marked all over with corrections, additions and inserts on the margin, everything was written illegibly and involved repeated copying. All this work, especially during the first years of their married life, devolved upon Tolstoi's wife. She wrote to her sister: "All day long I copy my husband's writings and get tired." She later wrote: "The copying of *War and Peace* and of other works of my husband was an aesthetic joy. I looked forward to the evenings without shrinking from the work, but with the anticipation of the pleasure of learning the progress of events in the story. I admired this life of the mind, the unexpected and infinitely varied turns of his creative imagination."

Tolstoi's son Ilya wrote about his mother: "She sat in the drawing-room, near the door to the 'Hall,' at her small writing-desk and all her free time she was writing.

"Bent low over the papers, she peered with her short-sighted eyes into my father's hieroglyphs, and sat thus for whole evenings, often going to bed last."

In this room I. N. Kramskoi painted Tolstoi's portrait in 1873.

Tolstoi's wife wrote later: "I remember entering the small drawing-room and looking at the two artists: one was painting Tolstoi's picture, the other writing his *Anna*

Karenina. Their faces were grave and concentrated, both were truly great artists and my soul filled with a deep respect towards them."

During intervals between sittings, artist and writer would engage in disputes about art; these disputes were reflected in the discussion between Vronsky and the artist Mikhailov in *Anna Karenina*, and in Tolstoi's "What is Art?"

To the left of the "Hall" door is a round mahogany table, also from the old house in Yasnaya Polyana, and beside it, a sofa and two comfortable arm-chairs of Persian walnut. While talking to the guests and friends who usually gathered in this corner, Tolstoi's wife would sew, knit, darn or do fancy work. It was at this table that Ivan Turgenev read his *The Dog* "with great expression and animation and the evening passed off in the purely Turgenev spirit."

A couch stands along the wall separating the drawing-room from the study, and beside it, a small bamboo table with a majolica top, a birthday present from Tolstoi's daughter Maria to her mother. A cabinet in the Russian style is at the window, and on it, plaster of Paris statuettes by Gintsburg (1891) and Aronson (1901).

Gintsburg stayed at Yasnaya Polyana in 1891 together with Repin; while the artist painted Tolstoi's portrait in the vaulted room, the sculptor worked at Tolstoi's bust.

The walls of the drawing-room are hung with numerous portraits of members of the Tolstoi family, of close friends, and with views of Yasnaya Polyana.

The authorized copy of the well-known picture by Repin (1891) representing Tolstoi immersed in creative work in his study —the Vaulted Room—preserves the image of the great worker among the tools of the manual labour to which he gave much of his time in the eighteen-eighties and nineties. As Stasov wrote on June 26, 1891: "It seems to me that the great writer's whole nature, all his creative soul, is rendered in flaming colours in this small picture

The eyes are cast down, but you feel the penetrating gaze he directs on to the things his firm hand is setting down on the paper before him. The table at which Tolstoi is working has been moved close to the window from which bright light enters the room. In a corner of the room we see a big spade standing against the wall, not far from it – a scythe standing upright; a saw hangs from the ceiling; a hatchet is on the floor by the door; clothes and a broad-brimmed hat hang from nails driven into the back wall. This portrait is a real picture and, for me, historical. It is a picture that will excite the joy and astonishment of our descendants."

On the wall separating the drawing-room from the "Hall" is a portrait (a copy in oils by an unknown artist from the original by H. Vogel von Vogelstein) of Anna Golitsyna, née Princess Prozorovskaya, whose face reminded Tolstoi's wife of her mother.

On entering the drawing-room from the "Hall" one has on one's left a large portrait by Ghe (oils, 1886) of Tolstoi's wife holding one of her daughters in her arms.

As Tolstoi's daughter Tatiana wrote, "I was very much flattered by his (Ghe's.—*N.P.*) desire to paint my portrait, but my father asked him to paint a portrait of my mother instead. . . . He depicted her sitting in an arm-chair, dressed in a velvet gown trimmed with lace. But one morning the artist came to the dining-room for coffee and told us the portrait was worthless. 'I can't stand it,' he said. 'There you see a lady in a velvet gown and all you can say about her is that she has 40,000 rubles at her disposal. No, we must have a woman, a mother, and this is just trash.'

"So he destroyed the portrait and several years passed before he painted the other in which my mother is portrayed standing and wearing a black mantilla."

There are also on that wall two landscapes in oils by Pokhitonov: *The Spot Where the Green Wand Was Buried* and *The Oaks at Chepyzh*. As Tolstoi's wife

said, once she "was caught in a heavy thunder-storm under these oaks. I had little Sergei in his perambulator." This episode was described in *Anna Karenina*—the chapter entitled "Kitty in Kolka."

The visitor's attention is drawn by the portraits of Lev Tolstoi's father—Nikolai Tolstoi as a young man, and of his grandfather Ilya Tolstoi, the Governor of Kazan. Both were drawn in pastel by the artist Bardou who lived in Kazan between 1812 and 1816, and it may be supposed that the portraits were done at the time Tolstoi's grandfather was the Governor of that city (1815-20).

The portraits in oils of the sisters of Tolstoi's father P. Yushkova and A. Osten-Saken by unknown artists are noteworthy, as is the photograph in an oval walnut frame, taken in the early sixties, of Tatiana Kuzminskaya—the sister of Tolstoi's wife. The latter wrote that Tolstoi used to say of Natasha, a character of *War and Peace*: "I took Tatiana, pounded her up together with Sophia and the result was Natasha."

To the right of the windows is the portrait (in an oval frame) of Major-General Sergei Volkonsky (1715-84), a participant of the Seven Years' War (1756-62), Tolstoi's great-grandfather who was the first owner of Yasnaya Polyana.

The portrait on the left of the windows is that of N. Volkonsky, a younger son of S. Volkonsky, as a youth

THE STUDY

Next to the drawing-room is a room with a wide window and a door leading to the balcony, which was twice used as Tolstoi's study—between 1856 and 1862, and from the summer of 1902 to October 28, 1910, when Tolstoi left Yasnaya Polyana. In this room Tolstoi wrote *Youth*, *Family Happiness*, *Articles on Pedagogics*, *Tikhon and Malania*, *Polikushka*, *Khaji-Murat*, *Memoirs*, *A Forged Note*, *After the Ball*, *Kornei Vasiliev*, *Alyoshka Gorshok*,

Lev Tolstoi at work

Photograph by K. Bulla (1908)

Berries, Posthumous Notes of the Ancient Fyodor Kuzmich, Father Vasili, My Dream, I Cannot Keep Silent, Songs in the Village, Three Days in the Country, Khodynka, None Is Guilty in This World, Dream, and many others.

The objects in the study kept Tolstoi company throughout his life, from his birth to the last days he spent at Yasnaya Polyana.

On the left of the door from the drawing-room is an old writing-table of Persian walnut with three drawers, covered with a worn green cloth. During all the long years Tolstoi spent at Yasnaya Polyana he always worked at this table, formerly his father's.

Among the great number of works written at this table are *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*. Whenever Tolstoi shifted his study, this table and the sofa which is in the room accompanied him to his new place of work.

The modest writing materials were hallowed in Tolstoi's eyes by family tradition. Among these are the leather case to keep papers in and the paper-weight—a bronze dog on a round slab of red marble. It used to belong to Tolstoi's "Auntie"—Yergolskaya—and was always on her table. Tolstoi mentions it in *Resurrection*: "Coming into his (Nekhlyudov's.—*N.P.*) small rooms Natalya Ivanovna inspected them closely. Everything was clean and neat—that was a familiar trait, but what struck her was the modesty of his surroundings. On the writing-table she saw the well-known paper-weight with the bronze dog. . . ." (Part 3, Chapter XXXI.)

Among the newer objects on the table the visitor's attention is attracted by a slab of green glass (a paper-weight), a present from the workers of the Maltsev Glass Factory on the occasion of Tolstoi's excommunication in 1901. The slab bears Tolstoi's monogram and the following inscription: "You, esteemed Lev Nikolayevich, have shared the fate of many great men who were ahead of their time. Before, too, they were burned at the stake.

The slab of green glass (paper-weight)

thrown into prisons and exiled. Let high priests, the Pharisees, excommunicate you from whatever they like. The Russian people will always be proud of you, great, dear and beloved one." Then follow signatures.

Tolstoi considered the glass paper-weight one of his dearest possessions and sent the following letter of acknowledgement: "I have received your beautiful present in which I value the inscription best of all, and ask you to convey my heartfelt thanks to all the signatories."*

There are some books on the table; one of these is *Life of the Russian People as Expressed in Proverbs and Sayings* by Illyustrov, by which Tolstoi set great store as a treasury of folklore. He saw in folklore a key to the understanding of life. "In order to understand life," Tolstoi wrote, "I must understand life as led not by us, exceptions and life's parasites, but by the common working people, by those who make life, and the sense they impart to it. The common working people around me were Russian and I turned towards them and the sense they imparted to life."**

Tolstoi's penholders with traces of ink on them, pencils, penknife, paper-knife and a set of writing materials are preserved in the drawers of the writing-table, together with several sealed letters bearing the date "1910" that arrived after Tolstoi's departure from Yasnaya Polyana and after his death.

In front of the table is a low arm-chair which belonged to Tolstoi's daughter Tatiana. Although short-sighted, Tolstoi never wore spectacles and liked to write sitting on low chairs. In the evening he used to read by the light of one candle which he himself lighted. Against the wall behind the writing-table is an old sofa upholstered in oil-

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* Lev Tolstoi's letter to A. Endaurov, 1901. Quoted from *The Biography of L. N. Tolstoi* by P. Biryukov, Vol. IV, State Publishers, Moscow-Petersburg, 1923, p. 32.

** L. Tolstoi, *Confession*, Moscow, Trezvaya Zhizn Publishers, 1919, p. 59.

cloth (formerly it was leather) on which were born Lev Tolstoi, his brothers and his sister, and on which he rested after dinner. The worn-out leather sofa studded with copper nails is associated with many a family legend and described in *Childhood*, *The Morning of a Landlord*, *The Romance of a Russian Landlord*, *Family Happiness*, *War and Peace*, *Anna Karenina*, and *Memoirs*.

Tolstoi stored his manuscripts in the drawers of the sofa.

Against the opposite wall is a round table flanked by two arm-chairs, one close by the door and the other, a very comfortable early XVIII century chair of the kind called "winged," in the corner. On returning after his morning walks, Tolstoi drank coffee here, went through his mail, and in the evening rested, played patience or had a talk with some visitor. It was in this comfortable study that the artist Moravov painted Tolstoi at work in 1909.

Tolstoi used to work intensively in perfect silence till two or three o'clock.

The shelves hanging over the writing-table are an exact copy of those made by Tolstoi and burned by Nazi invaders in 1941.

The upper shelf is occupied by the Brokhaus-Efron *Encyclopaedia*. Among the numerous annotations in Tolstoi's hand, those against the articles on Marx (Vol. 36), Engels (Vol. 80) and Socialism (Vol. 61) are of especial interest. On the lower shelf are books chiefly on philosophic, religious and moral subjects, including works by M. Montaigne, the French thinker of the XVI century, Plato and the ancient Chinese sages, Confucius and Lao-tse.

The shelves by the table contain *The Conquest of Bread* by Kropotkin, *A Collection of Revolutionary Songs*, *An Everyday Occurrence* (a Publicist's Notes on the Death Penalty) by Korolenko, bearing the author's inscription: "To Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoi from V. Korolenko in token of infinite gratitude for your great moral assistance." Tolstoi read the article and on March 27, 1910, wrote to

Korolenko: "Words fail me to express my gratitude and love for this article, excellent in expression, in idea and, most important of all, in sentiment. It must be printed and distributed in millions of copies. No speeches at the Duma, no treatises, no dramas, no novels will produce one-thousandth part of the influence which this article must produce."

That same year V. G. Korolenko visited Yasnaya Polyana and had a conversation with Tolstoi.

There, too, is a small symposium *On the Boycott of the Third Duma* by Social-Democrat authors published in 1907 and including Lenin's article "Against the Boycott. (From a Social-Democrat Publicist's Note-Book)." This article attracted Tolstoi's attention: markings in black pencil can be seen on the margin against the following lines: "...historical conditions of the applicability of boycott. A Social-Democrat adopting a Marxist point of view proceeds not from the degree to which this or that institution is reactionary, but from the existence of those specific conditions of struggle, under which (as we today also see from the experience of Russian revolution) the specific method called boycott can be applied. Those who start arguing about boycott without taking into consideration the two-year experience of our revolution..."

The annotations to Lenin's article, of which Tolstoi made a thorough study, as well as the choice of books in his study, indicate the exceedingly wide range of his interests and the exceptional attention and lively interest with which he followed the most significant events in Russia's political and public life.

At the door leading to the bedroom is the phonograph sent to Tolstoi by Thomas A. Edison in 1908 in token of his deep respect for the great Russian writer. Beside it are a plain yellow table and a book-stand, and by the window two old arm-chairs with plaited backs, formerly the property of Tolstoi's father.

The portraits, prints, photographs and copies of pic

Tolstoi's study

tures in Tolstoi's study show the tastes, interests and connections of Tolstoi at different periods of his life.

The right-hand part of the central wall (that opposite the window) is taken up by photographs of Tolstoi's literary friends: we see here Turgenev, Nekrasov, Fet and Kovalevsky, a group photo of the writers who contributed to the *Sovremennik* magazine (Goncharov, Grigorovich, Druzhinin, Ostrovsky, Tolstoi and Turgenev), taken by the photographer Levitsky, a cousin of Herzen, at the request of Tolstoi. Under the photograph, on the passe partout, are the signatures of Goncharov, Turgenev, Druzhinin, and Ostrovsky. Tolstoi's first contribution to the magazine was *Childhood* (known to the editors as *The Story of My Childhood*). Tolstoi wrote in his diary of January 14, 1907: "Looked at the portraits of the writers I knew in 1856 and clearly visualized those that are dead. . . ."*

Over the shelves on that wall are five lithograph details of Raphael's *Sistine Madonna*, a present from his old friend and relation A. A. Tolstaya.

Below and somewhat to the left is a small oak shelf on which is a bust of Tolstoi's elder and favourite brother Nikolai, who died while still young. In Tolstoi's diary we find an entry on October 25, 1860, saying: "Nikolai's death produced the strongest impression on me."

Over the sofa hang seven photographs of the paintings by the artist Orlov depicting scenes from peasant life. Tolstoi prized them as a faithful portrayal of the poverty, ignorance and injustice of contemporary peasant life. In the preface to the collection of these photographs Tolstoi wrote: "My favourite subject . . . is the Russian people—the true Russian muzhik."** There is a copy of the collection in the study.

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* Lev Tolstoi, *Complete Works*, Vol. 56, p. 6.

** *Russian Muzhiks*. The paintings by N. Orlov with a preface by Lev Tolstoi published by Gmlike and Vilber, St Petersburg 1909, p. 3

Near the bedroom door hangs a wooden dipper with a chain. The dipper bears an inscription in Tatar: "To Mister Count Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoi from Arslan-Ali Sultanov."

On the other side of the door is a shelf on which, in a black leather case, are field-glasses and a small bone abacus which belonged to Tolstoi's father. Close by is a curious collection of miniatures representing Tolstoi's ancestors and relatives (the Gorchakovs, the Volkonskys and the Tolstois) framed in a small four-fold screen. The screen was made by Alexeyev, the tutor of Tolstoi's children, and "the portraits were inserted in the holders of the screen in the order indicated by Lev Nikolayevich."*

Right of the drawing-room door, over the book-shelf containing books for visitors, is a large portrait of Charles Dickens. All his life Tolstoi loved Dickens for the democratic and humane qualities of his writing. When in London in 1861, Tolstoi attended Dickens' lectures on education.

The wall opposite the writing-table is hung with numerous portraits executed in various media—daguerreotype, water-colour, photography.

Left of the door is an oval photograph of Joachim Lelewel, a Polish revolutionary, whom Tolstoi visited in Brussels in 1861 on Herzen's recommendation. Here, too, are two excellently preserved daguerreotype portraits of Princess L. I. Volkonskaya, née Truthson (1825-90) and of her husband, A. A. Volkonsky (1818-65), a chamberlain; the latter is portrayed in Tolstoi's *History of Yesterday*. A piece of paper is pasted to the back of Volkonskaya's portrait, bearing the following inscription in Tolstoi's handwriting: "The Little Princess of *War and Peace*."

In a black oval frame we see a photograph of the children of Maria Nikolayevna, Tolstoi's sister, and beside it, her own photograph as an old nun. This group of fam-

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* V. I. Alexeyev, *Reminiscences of L. N. Tolstoi*, The Annals of the State Literary Museum, Book 12, Moscow 1948, p. 285.

ily portraits includes a large portrait of Tolstoi's brother Sergei, taken two years before his death. Tolstoi wrote: "I admired Sergei as some utterly strange being, one not to be understood. His was a human life full of beauty, but such as I could not understand; it was mysterious and all the more attractive for that very reason. A few days ago he died, and, fatally ill, on his deathbed he was as unfathomable, as dear to me, as in the bygone days of our childhood."*

One of the two water-colours of Tolstoi's father Nikolai Ilyich represents him in a black uniform with a red collar, and the other, in a brown Cossack blouse.

Among the portraits are an old photograph of Colonel Sergei Dmitrievich Gorchakov (1794-1873), an uncle of Tolstoi's twice removed, who participated in the war against Napoleon in 1812-14; a water-colour by Osokin done in 1836 and representing Colonel Vladimir Ivanovich Yushkov, the husband of one of Tolstoi's aunts (1789-1869), as a young man, and a photograph of Lev Tolstoi with his wife and daughter Maria.

It was in this study, surrounded by familiar objects and the portraits of his dear ones, that Tolstoi spent the last hours before leaving Yasnaya Polyana on the night of October 28, 1910. Here he wrote his farewell letter to his wife: "My departure will grieve you, I am very sorry for that, but try to understand and believe me that I could not act differently. Life at home is becoming, nay, has become, unbearable. Apart from other things, I cannot live among the luxury among which I have been living all my life, and so I do what old men of my age usually do—I leave the world to live in solitude and quiet the last days of my life."**

On the round table lies an open book—*The Brothers*

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* Lev Tolstoi, *Complete Works*, Vol. 34, pp. 387-88.

** *Letters of Count Lev Tolstoi to His Wife, 1862-1910*, Moscow 1915, pp. 590-91.

Karamazov by Dostoyevsky, which Tolstoi was reading a few hours before he left home. Before going, Tolstoi put out the candles on the writing-table; they have never been lit since.

Everything in the study has been preserved intact; the visitor cannot help feeling that Tolstoi left the room but recently.

TOLSTOI'S BEDROOM

Next to the study is a bright room with two windows looking out on to the upper balcony. This was Tolstoi's bedroom from 1862 to 1910.

In this room, on the night of October 28, 1910, Tolstoi finally decided to leave Yasnaya Polyana for good. The entry in the diary says: "Went to bed at half past eleven. Slept till three. Awoke and, as on the previous nights, heard doors opening and footsteps. On previous nights I had not looked at my door but this time I did so and saw a bright light in the study through the chinks, and heard the rustle of papers. It must be Sophia Andreyevna looking for something and probably reading. The day before she asked, she demanded that I should not lock the doors. . . . Steps again, the sound of a door being cautiously opened, and she went out. I do not know why, but this aroused within me uncontrollable aversion and indignation. I wanted to go to sleep but could not; I tossed from side to side, then lit my candle and sat up. The door opened and my wife came in; she asked how I was and expressed astonishment at seeing a light in my room. The aversion and indignation grew stronger. I am lying and counting the beatings of my pulse—97. Cannot stay lying and all of a sudden I decide firmly to leave. I write a letter to her, pack my things—the barest necessities, so as to be gone as quick as possible. I tremble at the thought she may hear me."*

* Lev Tolstoi, *Complete Works*, Vol 58, pp 123-24

Beginning with 1882, Tolstoi's diaries and letters contain the idea of breaking away from the "genteel" way of life and starting a life of labour, under simple, natural conditions. The above entry in the "Diary for Myself Alone" marks the consummation of the decision to leave Yasnaya Polyana Tolstoi had taken long ago.

Nearly all the objects now in the bedroom used to belong to Tolstoi's father or to his "Auntie" Yergolskaya.

To the left of the door from the study is his father's mahogany chiffonier-bureau. Tolstoi wrote in 1902: "It was from this very chiffonier that my father spilt gold coins and we children picked them up." Inside, there are his father's inkstand, Tolstoi's linen and other things. Near the stove is a mahogany washstand, which also belonged to his father and, the family maintain, used to accompany Tolstoi in campaigns abroad.

Beside the washstand are two enamelled buckets. Tolstoi's views in later years prevented him from having anybody serve him, and he himself did his room, brought water in one of the buckets and carried away slops in the other. We see other objects which Tolstoi used every day, such as the dumb-bells he used for physical exercises even in his old age, and the riding crop. He went riding almost every day and enjoyed it immensely both in his youth and as an old man. In his memoirs Repin immortalized the "Erl-King" Tolstoi making his way through the thickets of the clearing on his favourite Delir. By the door to the landing there hangs on a stand a shooting-stick This was Tolstoi's constant companion during his walks alone with Nature he would unfold it, rest and set his thoughts down on paper.

The clothes, including an overcoat, hat, several blouses and a dressing-gown, which Tolstoi used during the last years of his life at Yasnaya Polyana, are kept in this room.

Opposite the study door, against a projection in the wall, stands an iron bedstead painted brown; on it are two horse-hair mattresses, for Tolstoi did not like springs

Tolstoi's bedroom

The bed is covered with a counterpane ornamented with a Greek motif knitted by Tolstoi's wife.

There is a small embroidered cushion on the bed, with the following inscription embroidered in black wool: "One of the 700 Sh-o geese." This is a gift from Tolstoi's sister Maria who was one of the 700 nuns of the Shamordino Nunnery. The inscription is her reply to her brother's remarks about the nunnery's charter and is characteristic of the friendly relations existing between brother and sister.

The plain night-table at the bedside belonged to Yergolskaya. On it is a crocheted doily, a round clock with a support, a bell, a candlestick with the candle that was lighted when Tolstoi was preparing to leave Yasnaya Polyana, a match-box, some medicine-bottles, a yellow cardboard box in which Tolstoi put his fountain-pen and pencils to be able to record new ideas that came to him at night.

In the drawer are bandages, charcoal powder, ground almonds, medicines, etc.

It is well known that Tolstoi had an unsurpassed ability to work, so much so that during a grave illness in 1903, when confined to his bed, he continued working on the book *Wise Men's Thoughts for Every Day* and dictating his *Memoirs*.

At the windows are old arm-chairs with plaited backs brought to the bedroom from his father's study. On one of the chairs is the knitted brown jacket, familiar to everybody from Tolstoi's late photographs.

A card-table is under the mirror hanging between the windows, and on it metal boxes containing medicines and prescriptions, a long narrow box with two electric pencils with batteries, for writing in the dark.

On the walls are portraits of people especially dear to Tolstoi: his father (an enlarged photograph of a water-colour by an unknown artist), of whom Tolstoi said: "his face was pleasant and the eyes always sad"; Tolstoi's

Tolstoi's personal belongings

daughter Maria (oils, by his daughter Tatiana, the 90s). Tolstoi wrote: "My daughter Maria is so good that I always restrain myself so as not to praise her too much."* Over the bed is a portrait of Tatiana (oils, by Igumnova, 1898). Three years before his death Tolstoi wrote: "...Tatiana has come. I enjoyed her company very much indeed. She is very dear to me and she is very good."** There are also two enlarged photographs of Tolstoi's wife, one taken in 1860 and the other, in 1884.

From the moment Tolstoi left home the bedroom was carefully preserved just as he had left it. But on retreating from Yasnaya Polyana, the Nazis set fire to the room with the remaining furniture and straw. The fire destroyed half the floor, part of a wall and the ceiling. Now it has been completely restored.

THE ROOM OF TOLSTOI'S WIFE

Between 1894 and 1897 this room was occupied by Tolstoi's daughters or by some visiting relatives. The diary of Sophia Andreyevna Tolstaya contains the following entry on July 3, 1897: "Have moved into Maria's room from my bedroom."

This room is in startling contrast to the rest of the rooms at Yasnaya Polyana. The multitude of various objects and photographs in this room bear eloquent witness to the tastes of its inmate and remind one that this was the sanctuary of a mother and grandmother of a large family and the mistress of the estate.

In the words of A. I. Tolstaya-Popova, Tolstoi's eldest granddaughter, "My grandmother was always busy with all kinds of work: she sewed my grandfather's shirts and linen, marked it and mended it; she had a quiet way of doing all this, as if it were to please herself.

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* Lev Tolstoi, *Complete Works*, Vol. 86, p. 84.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 56, p. 203.

The room of Tolstoi's wife

"She was never idle. In the morning she settled accounts, put her things in order, tried on dresses which were for ever being made and remade. After coffee, she went through her scales or ran (she actually ran) to the garden with her box of colours to paint the pond, an alley, the house, all kinds of grasses, flowers, mushrooms, etc. Or she would write, make entries in her diary, which she did almost every day; put in order books.... Then proofs would be received and then from the morning onwards she would settle down in the drawing-room near my grandfather's study to read them."

The walls are hung all over with numerous photographs of Tolstaya's children, grandchildren, relatives and friends. Some she took herself.

Tolstaya was very fond of photography and left behind her a great number of negatives and photographs, some of which she had used for the album *Episodes from the Life of L. N. Tolstoi.*

There are several portraits of Tolstoi at different periods of his life, and a number of studies by Tolstaya—still life and landscapes depicting different spots at Yasnaya Polyana. Painting was Tolstaya's hobby during the last years of her life.

The large number of different objects of everyday life, and of photographs representing children of all ages, show that Tolstaya was a loving and affectionate mother. She not only supervised the education of her children and grandchildren, but sewed for them and mended and marked their linen.

Between the windows is a small writing-table made by a local joiner; at it Tolstaya made up her household books, went through her bills, settled her accounts and prepared the menus. At this table, too, she attended to her correspondence, both business (chiefly dealing with the publication of her husband's works) and private—letters to her relatives, friends and acquaintances. Tolstaya went in for literary work: she kept a diary, much of it written

in this room and the greater part published since the revolution in four volumes edited by her son Sergei. She also wrote eight volumes of memoirs entitled *My Life* and *Day after Day*, and two autobiographical stories, *About the "Kreutzer Sonata"* and *Song Without Words*, still unpublished.

In Tolstaya's lifetime several poems in blank verse, a collection of stories for children entitled *Little Dolls-Skeletons*, and other works were published. She also wrote articles on literary and social subjects, both during her husband's lifetime and after his death.

At the writing-table is Tolstoi's working chair, well known from the portrait by Repin (1887, State Tretyakov Gallery).

Over the writing-table is an enlarged photograph of Tolstoi's youngest and favourite son Ivan, who died of scarlet fever as a child in 1895.

Beside the writing-table at the window is the old sewing-machine. "My sewing-machine is forty-five years old, it used to belong to my mother. It is an historical machine – I sewed with its help all of my husband's shirts and linen. He did not like me to order them from strangers," Tolstaya said of it.

Under the icon in the corner is the old mahogany bureau-chiffonier that used to belong to Yergolskaya, to whom Tolstoi wrote: "I cannot picture you anywhere but in your little room ... at your favourite little table, beside the chiffonier which contains everything in the world. Whenever Nikolai and I are short of anything we say: 'Pity, Auntie's chiffonier is not here.' "*

Beside it is the dressing-table which Tolstoi's brother Sergei bought for Sophia Andreyevna when she was expected at Yasnaya Polyana after her wedding.

The wall over the sofa is hung with portraits of members of the Tolstoi and Bers families and of many friends,

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* Lev Tolstoi, *Complete Works*, Vol. 59, p. 178

including Fet, Strakhov, Taneyev, L.D. and S.S. Urusov, Ghe and Maslov.

In this room is the bed bought by her sons for Tolstaya when she was ill in 1906. Over it are portraits of her sons who died young—Alexei, Ivan, and Andrei; a big portrait of Lev Tolstoi, and a study by the artist N. A. Kasatkin depicting the grave of Alexei and Ivan at Nikolskoye Cemetery, near Moscow.

There is also the night-table, arm-chairs, and the mahogany chiffonier that used to belong to Tolstoi's mother-in-law, an old work-table, a bookcase, and several other things.

Inside the cupboards, drawers, chiffoniers, trunks and caskets are a great number of drawings, photographs, and various other objects connected with the life of Tolstoi's family or earlier generations of the Tolstois and Volkonskys. Among other things are water-colours by Tolstoi's father, by his aunt A. I. Osten-Saken and by his brother Dmitri, ancient family icons, pieces of embroidery, books with the signatures of Tolstoi's mother, of Yergolskaya, and many other mementoes.

The careful attention Tolstoi's wife bestowed on the family relics shows her to have been a careful guardian of family traditions. This characteristic is revealed in her thorough and loving approach towards the cataloguing of all the objects in the Tolstoi house; her catalogue to this day serves as the basis for the museum inventory.

Here Tolstaya lived through many of the bitter moments of her life—her husband's disappearance and death, and the death of some of her grown-up children. In remembering her husband, she bitterly repented not having understood him well enough while there was yet time, causing him much grief by her hysterical moods that became stronger with advancing years.

Maxim Gorky well understood Tolstaya's complex role as the wife of a great writer. In his article about her he wrote: "Lev Tolstoi's was the most complicated personali-

ty of all the great men of the nineteenth century. The role of his only intimate friend, that of wife, mother of his numerous children and mistress of his house was undoubtedly a very hard and responsible one."*

This is what Tolstoi's wife said of her last years: "My lonely life at Yasnaya Polyana and the energy that used to be expended on living are now bent on bearing my existence with dignity and submission. I try to occupy myself only with that which has some bearing on the memory of my husband. I live at Yasnaya Polyana guarding the house with the things that were in it during his lifetime, and his grave."

Tolstaya lived in this room till her death: she died of inflammation of the lungs at the age of 75 on November 4, 1919.

When retreating, the Nazis set fire to this room; they smashed the locks of the two cupboards that remained and stole some objects from them. After their retreat the room was restored and it is now just as it used to be when Tolstaya lived in it.

THE "REMINGTON" OR "SECRETARY" ROOM

On the first floor of the northern part of the house are two adjacent rooms—the "Remington" or "Secretary" room and the library. Tolstoi called the two rooms his "Chancellory."

The first was used for the most varied purposes. Between 1862 and 1863 it was occupied by Tolstoi's wife; from June 1863 to October 28, 1864, it was a nursery; from the end of 1864 to 1866 it was Tolstoi's study (in it he worked on *War and Peace*); during the 70s and up to the 90s it was again a nursery, then the room for Tolstoi's daughters, and the guest-room. Later it was given to the governesses, and from 1907 to August 4, 1909,

* M. Gorky, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXII, Moscow and Leningrad, State Publishers, 1933, p. 147.

to N. N. Gusev (up to the time he was arrested), and later to V. F. Bulgakov, both of whom were Tolstoi's secretaries. The latter lived here till 1910.

On hot summer days Tolstoi would leave his study, which faced south, and work either in the "secretary" room or in the library.

A Remington typewriter stands on a small table at the window. On it Tolstoi's mss were typed either here or in the next room. Here, too, were typed the articles prohibited by the tsarist censorship. From his study Tolstoi brought the mss of his literary works, letters, and proofs for typing. In the secretary room (and sometimes in the "Hall") the extensive correspondence connecting Yasnaya Polyana with all the world was sorted. To some of the letters Tolstoi himself replied; his daughters or secretaries answered others, while some remained unanswered.

After Tolstoi's death there were nearly 50,000 letters left, now in his archives, while of the 90 volumes of Tolstoi's *Complete Works* now being published, over 30 will contain his letters.

The furnishings of the Remington room are exceedingly modest and indicate the intensive work which took place here. In front of the sofa is a plain yellow table with four drawers (before it was used here, Tolstoi's children had studied at this table); then there is an old small semi-circular chest of drawers, some bent-wood chairs, and two arm-chairs; on the small table by the door is a copying press with which copies of Tolstoi's letters were taken during the last years of his life.

On the wall near the stove is a sketch in oils by Igumnova of Tarpan, the steppe horse which Tolstoi rode for some time.

Over the sofa are two landscapes in oils by an unknown artist, copies of postcards, of very low artistic merit. *Night* and *Spring*, presented to Tolstoi on his eightieth birthday by Batashov, the well-known Tula samovar manufacturer.

Near the window, in a big oak frame, is a heliogravure of Venceslav Czerny's *Burning of Jan Hus*. A copper plate bearing the following inscription is screwed to the frame: "To the great Russian reformer Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoi, in memory of the date on which the Czech reformer Jan Hus was burned—June 23 (July 6), 1415, from the All-Slav Society *Slavia*, Moscow, June 23, 1909."

THE LIBRARY

Next to the "secretary" room is a well-lit room with a double window, which served as dining-room up to 1871. The door that used to connect it with the small drawing-room (later Tolstoi's study) was boarded up early in 1872. Then the room served as class-room, nursery, and, beginning with the nineties (after the death of son Ivan)—the library, where Tolstoi's daughters and secretaries worked. It also did duty as a guest-room. Its furniture consists chiefly of eight bookcases. Although far from embracing all the book riches of Yasnaya Polyana (indeed, books are dispersed throughout the house), the bulk of Tolstoi's books are to be found here. Tolstoi's library as a whole contains 10,247 titles and is made up of more than 22,000 volumes. All in all, it occupies 28 bookcases.

The founders of the library were Tolstoi's grandfather N. S. Volkonsky and his own father. The library contains a wide variety of books. The choice of books Tolstoi himself collected depended on the work he was doing. For instance, the great number of books on education were collected between 1850 and 1870 when Tolstoi taught at the school he set up and was writing the *Alphabet* and the *Readers*. There are many books on the history of the Napoleonic Wars, memoirs and historical works dealing with the Decembrist movement, which Tolstoi used as material for *War and Peace* and *The Decembrists*; books he needed for the novel from the times of Peter I, books on the Caucasus—for *Khaji-Murat*, books on social and economic

problems, on the state, taxation, books on philosophy, theology, the history and philosophy of art—for the article "What Is Art?", collections of Russian folklore—the *bylinas*, sayings and proverbs by which Tolstoi set great store. Tolstoi made Platon Karatayev utter proverbs and sayings he had himself recorded or taken from collections; they are to be found in the speeches of Akim (*The Power of Darkness*) and of the peasants (*The Fruits of Education*), and of many other characters. The library also contains Russian and foreign classics and works by contemporary authors.

There are books in the Yasnaya Polyana library in Russian, English, French, German, Italian, Swedish, Japanese, Greek, Serbian, and other languages.

Tolstoi was a great reader and, according to those who knew him well, long remembered what he read. He knew French, English and German to perfection. In later life he learned several languages, ancient and modern, some of which he knew better than others. Among these were Polish, Czech, Bulgarian, Tatar, Italian, Arabian, Dutch, Latin, Greek and Hebrew. The latter two he studied when past his prime. "I live in Athens and speak Greek in my dreams," he wrote to Fet in 1871 when he was engrossed in Homer's *Iliad*; twelve years later, Tolstoi wrote to Alexeyev: "All this time I have been busy studying Hebrew; I have mastered it fairly well, I can read and understand it. I have learned much, thanks to these studies."*

Some of the books bear the signatures of well-known Russian and foreign writers, artists, composers and scientists, as, for instance, Gorky, Mechnikov, Fet, S. Aksakov, Korolenko, Romain Rolland, Danilevsky, Polenov, Andreyev, Tanyev, Morozov, G. B. Shaw, Timiryazev, Serafimovich, Stasov, Gandhi, and others. Some of the autographs are worded in an original way, characteristic of their authors' attitude to Tolstoi.

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* Lev Tolstoi, *Complete Works*, Vol. 63, p. 106

The library after it had been looted and set fire to by the fascists

Photograph taken in 1941

Many of the books in Tolstoi's private library bear annotations in his own hand. Of especial interest is Volume I of Marx's *Capital* with Tolstoi's notes in the margins. In Volume II of Bogdanovich's *The History of the Patriotic War* are comments which Tolstoi introduced in full in the final version of *War and Peace.*

The books that Tolstoi read and marked in pencil are highly varied. Tolstoi seems to have acquired the habit of underscoring or marking passages during the late 50s. The markings, chiefly in pencil but sometimes in ink, as well as turned corners and lines drawn with the fingernail, are not the expressions of Tolstoi's approval or disapproval but are meant merely to set apart passages that had for some reason or other attracted his attention. Later, Tolstoi made marks expressing his opinion, favourable or otherwise, using certain letters, words, and notes of interrogation and, beginning with the late 90s, marks like those used at school, from zero to five with one or several pluses. One often finds dry flowers between the pages, scentless and colourless, and other book-marks.

Tolstoi's library at Yasnaya Polyana is of immense value: it enables us to follow the development of his creative thought and reveals the problems that occupied his mind at different stages of his life.

On the large writing-table in the library is a wooden desk-set with the inscription "The Axe cannot erase what the Pen hath writ," presented to Tolstoi by the peasant Deyev from Yasnaya Polyana.

A little statue of Stasov in a Russian shirt and top-boots, by Gintsburg, stands on one of the cases.

This room suffered most at the hands of the Nazi invaders. Here, too, they lit a fire in which two bookcases (fortunately empty) were burned, as well as a shelf, part of the door and almost all the floor. All this destruction was repaired in May 1942.

The library door opens on the landing, from which the stairs lead down to the entrance-hall.

THE MAKOVITSKY ROOM

From the entrance-hall a door leads to the small corridor full of bookcases. Left of the corridor is the former butler's pantry and right—the Makovitsky room.

During the eighties it was occupied by tutors and teachers of Tolstoi's children. Later it was the boys' room and the guest-room. From 1902 it was occupied by Tolstoi's doctors—Nikitin, Berkenheim, and others, and after 1904—by Dushan Petrovich Makovitsky.

The furnishings of the room are extremely modest: two plain cupboards, a table, several chairs, a folding bed, a screen, a medicine-chest hanging on the wall, a bookshelf. This room plays a special role in Tolstoi's departure. Makovitsky wrote: "At three o'clock in the morning of October 28 Lev Nikolayevich, in his dressing-gown and slippers with no socks, came into my room with a candle and woke me. His face expressed suffering, and he said to me excitedly and resolutely: 'I have decided to leave. You shall go with me. I am going upstairs, come to join me there but do not wake Sophia Andreyevna. We shan't take much with us - the barest necessities.' "

THE VAULTED ROOM

A double door leads from the Makovitsky room to the vaulted room.

When the house belonged to Volkonsky, and perhaps when Tolstoi was a boy, this was used as larder. Iron rings are fixed to the massive, five-foot thick vaulted ceiling, for hanging hams and other things. The windows were protected with cast-iron gratings, traces of which remain today. At the end of the fifties planks were substituted for the stone floor.

According to Tolstoi's sister-in-law and his eldest son, this room had been used for various purposes. "It served as dining-room, nursery, and study."

For about 20 of the years during which Tolstoi lived at Yasnaya Polyana the vaulted room was his study.

It was so from the end of 1862 till 1864, when Tolstoi worked out the plan and wrote the beginning of *War and Peace*.

As Tolstoi wrote in October 1863: "Never before have I experienced such spiritual and moral freedom and been so fit for work as now. And I have work to do. This work is a novel on the times between 1810-20, which has been fully occupying me since autumn. Now I am a writer to the bottom of my heart and I write and elaborate my subject as I have never done before."*

From 1864 until the eighties the room was nursery for Tolstoi's elder children, then it became his sons' room. His wife wrote to him on November 25, 1864: "I spend all my time downstairs, here is my domain, here are my children, my life and my occupations. When I go upstairs I feel I am a visitor."**

Between 1887 and 1902 the room was again used as Tolstoi's study, and here were written *The Kingdom of Heaven Is Within You*, *Father Sergius*, *The Master and the Labourer*, *What is Art?*, *The Living Corpse*, *Resurrection*, *The Kreutzer Sonata*, *The Young Tsar*, the first version of *Khaji-Murat*, and several articles. Some of the above works were written partly in the vaulted room at Yasnaya Polyana and partly in Moscow.

Like the early eighties, Tolstoi spent these years in Moscow, but he could not do without the refreshing "bath of country life." At Yasnaya Polyana, far from the turmoil of city life, "from the harassing bustle of Moscow," Tolstoi divided his time between intense creative work and hard physical labour. Tolstoi's letters and diaries give a vivid picture of his way of life at this time, of his love

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* *Lev Tolstoi's Correspondence with Countess A. A. Tolstaya* The Tolstoi Museum, Vol. I. St. Petersburg 1911, p. 192.

** S. A. Tolstaya, *Letters to I. N. Tolstoi*, Moscow and Leningrad, *Academia*, 1936, p. 29.

for life, for work, for Russian nature and the Russian people, of the deep sympathy he felt for the needs and sufferings of the peasants, and of his growing discontent with the "genteel" tenor of life at Yasnaya Polyana.

The entry in the diary for August 10, 1889, reads: "Spent the morning reading. At noon went to plough and ploughed until late at night."*

"I burn with the desire to write not fiction, not drama, but in the epic style—the continuation of *Resurrection* about Nekhlyudov living as a peasant. Nature touches me to tears: the meadows, the woods, the cornfields, the ploughing and haymaking."** Then Tolstoi wrote to Chertkov: "This year I am spending in the country in a new way: I get up and go to bed early, do not write anything but work much—either cobbling or making hay.... There's a lot of people staying with us—my own and the Kuzminskys' children, and it often makes me shudder to see this immoral idleness and gluttony.... I see and know all the village work going on around us. And they eat and soil their clothes and the rooms. Others are doing everything for them and they do nothing—not even for themselves."***

As Tolstoi's wife later recalled, in the summer of 1891 Repin "worked ceaselessly" in that room on his picture *Tolstoi in his Yasnaya Polyana Vaulted Study*. "He and Lev Nikolayevich often engaged in long conversations about art, religion, and other subjects."

In his article "How I Worked at Yasnaya Polyana" Gintsburg, the sculptor, writes: "I obeyed Ilya Yefimovich**** and followed him into the room. Lev Nikolayevich was sitting at the window and writing. I was struck by the surroundings among which Tolstoi worked. The old

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* Lev Tolstoi, *Complete Works*, Vol. 50-51, p. 121.

** *Yasnaya Polyana* Collection of Articles and Documents. Moscow, State Publishers, 1942, p. 82.

*** Lev Tolstoi, *Complete Works*, Vol. 85, p. 69

**** Repin.—*Tr.*

cellar reminded one of a medieval hermit's cell. The vaulted ceiling, the iron gratings in the windows, the old furniture, the iron rings in the ceiling, the scythe, the saw—everything breathed an air of mystery. Tolstoi himself, in a white blouse, was sitting with one leg thrust under him on a low chest covered with a rug and looked like a fairy-tale magician. When we came in he looked at us with astonishment and said, 'Come to work, are you? That's good. Am I sitting right?' We began to settle ourselves. I took a place beside Repin who was finishing his work. I liked it immensely: the furnishings of the room, the light penetrating through the window, and the figure of Tolstoi himself are rendered with astonishing veracity and artistry."

Since 1902 the vaulted room was occupied by Tolstoi's daughters; it was here that, on November 27, 1906, Tolstoi's "greatest joy," his daughter Maria, died in the arms of her father of membraneous pneumonia. She was the closest to him of all his children. Her death deprived him of "the only source of warmth which he needed more and more as he grew old."

Among the furniture in the vaulted room we should note the old long wooden arm-chair with a rectangular back slightly bent backwards and high arm-rests. Tolstoi's wife wrote that the arm-chair was a memorable one: when in August 1862 she came on a visit to Yasnaya Polyana with her mother, two sisters and brother Vladimir, Tolstoi himself brought in what was needed for the night and made a bed for her with his own hands on a long arm-chair in the vaulted room.

At the left-hand wall stands an old mahogany dressing-table with three mirrors that used to belong to Tolstoi's aunt P. I. Yushkova. On the writing-table to the right of the window is an ebony-inlaid mahogany casket, with a copper locket set in its lid and bearing the monogram *L. T.* with a count's coronet. The casket belonged to Tolstoi's aunt twice removed, A. A. Tolstaya, and, in accor-

Lev Tolstoi in the Vaulted Room

From an oil painting by I. Y. Repin (1891)

dance with her will, became the property of the Tolstois at Yasnaya Polyana.

Beside the door leading to the box-room is a portrait of Tolstoi, made in crayons by Igumnova (1902), showing him with a book sitting in an invalid chair at Gaspra. On the wall facing the window is a group photograph of Tolstoi and his family and friends, taken by his wife on August 28, 1898, on Tolstoi's seventieth birthday, a photograph of Tolstoi's five sons, and other pictures.

THE GUEST-ROOM

A panel door leads from the entrance-hall to the Guest-Room. The Tolstois called it also the Lower Library and the Room with the Bust. It has two windows and a door to the stone terrace without balustrade on the southern side of the house.

Between the end of 1871 and the late eighties the room was Tolstoi's study, and visitors were left here for the night.

As Tolstoi's son Ilya wrote: "Downstairs, under the 'Hall,' Papa has made a study for himself. He had a semi-circular niche made in the wall and placed here a marble bust of his late beloved brother Nikolai.

"The bust was done abroad from my uncle's death mask and Papa says that the likeness is very good, because it was done by a good sculptor under the direction of Papa himself."

When Tolstoi was working on his *Alphabet* he set up a school for the peasants in his "new study," the teachers at the school were himself or some of his children or relatives.

As Tolstoi's wife wrote to her sister on February 2, 1872, "After the holidays we decided to open a school, about 35 children come to it and we teach them. It is very difficult to teach 10 children all at once, and yet it is a pleasure. We have divided our pupils

among us and I have 8 girls and 2 boys. The chief reason prompting us to teach them their three R's is that it is so necessary and they are all so eager and happy to learn."

Between 1873 and 1877 Tolstoi here wrote his *Anna Karenina.* In Chapter XXVI, Part One, is a description of Levin's study in which we recognize Tolstoi's own room and different objects still preserved in it. "The study was slowly lit by the candle carried in. The familiar objects became visible: the antlers, shelves filled with books, the mirror-like surface of the stove with the air-hole that should have been repaired long ago, his father's sofa, the big table, an open book on the table, the broken ash-tray, the exercise-book with something written by him."

In addition to the *Alphabet* and *Anna Karenina,* parts of other works were written here. The other parts were written in Moscow where Tolstoi spent the winters since 1881. These include passages from the unfinished historical novels from the times of Peter I and about the Decembrists, *Confession, Then What Shall We Do?,* folk tales, *The Power of Darkness, On Life, Kholstomer* and others.

A thin wooden partition put up in 1905 divides the room into two unequal parts. Previously, the room was divided by bookcases and wooden blocks put on them.

It was while Tolstoi was working in this study that there came about that change in his outlook and ideas that had long been maturing in his mind. He wrote about this in his *Confession* with characteristic sincerity: "A revolution that was long maturing in my mind and the roots of which have always been there has at last happened. It has come to pass that the life people of my station, rich and learned, are leading has not only palled upon me but has lost all its meaning. All our actions, ideas, sciences and arts appear before me in a new light. I have come to understand that all this is mere diversion, that no sense can be found in it. But the life of the labouring

people, of the humanity that creates life, has acquired for me its true meaning. I have come to understand that *that* is life itself, that the sense *that* life has is the truth, and I have accepted it."

From the time the study was transferred to the vaulted room until 1910 this room served as library and guest-room. Here, beyond the partition, stayed many of the visitors to Yasnaya Polyana, as well as Tolstoi's intimate friends, among them Turgenev, Fet, Chekhov, Repin, Korolenko, Strakhov, Nesterov, Stasov, Taneyev, Pasternak, Ghe, Mechnikov and S. S Urusov.

In his reminiscences of his visit to Yasnaya Polyana in 1887, A. F. Koni writes: "Lev Nikolayevich told me that I was to live in his work-room downstairs and led me there. It was a spacious room . . . divided by a low partition into two unequal parts. In the bigger part with a door to a small terrace and the garden, were bookcases. On a chest against the wall were cobbler's tools and materials. In the smaller part was a large writing-table. Here, beside the book-shelves, a bed was put for me. During the day Lev Nikolayevich worked here. On bringing me into the room he busied himself with something in its larger part while I undressed and got into bed, then he came to me to say good night. But there sprang up between us that typically Russian conversation which we are so fond of holding in the entrance-hall, on the point of leaving, or sitting on the edge of the bed. This is exactly what Tolstoi did: he sat on the edge of my bed and started a heart-to-heart talk filling my soul with the ineffable charm of his personality."

In this room in 1887 Repin did his first portrait of Tolstoi against the background of a bookcase. Tolstoi usually talked to his numerous guests in this room, too.

In 1880 he had a talk here with the writer Garshin. Tolstoi's son Ilya wrote of this: "My father made Garshin tell him in detail all he had passed through

"Papa sat beside him on the leather sofa and we children surrounded them.

"He was a clever and pleasant narrator and he gave us a true picture of the horrors of war, and his stories were so absorbing that we sat there all the evening long, not taking our eyes off him for fear of missing a word."

Of the objects in the study in the seventies the antlers, the bookcase, two arm-chairs with plaited backs by a local joiner, and the square table in front of the sofa are preserved. In his sculpture Gintsburg shows us Tolstoi working at this table. On the wall are portraits of Tolstoi's daughter Tatiana and wife (black chalk and Indian ink). Of this portrait Tolstoi wrote to his wife in 1883: "Your chalk portrait is, I think, bad, but whenever I look at it I remember you very vividly, there's something sad about your face, just as it seemed to me when we were taking leave of each other, and this moves me deeply. Can there be no resignation? Then you and all around you would be so happy. I write these words and can well picture to myself how you will be angry for them. Please don't be angry, dear; looking at this portrait, I see how much I love you and how I need you."*

In the niche is the marble bust of Tolstoi's elder brother Nikolai.

In front of this, head towards the space between the windows, was placed the coffin with the body of the great writer, brought to Yasnaya Polyana on November 9, 1910, from Astapovo Railway Station. Thousands of people, anxious to pay their last respects to Tolstoi, passed through this room, entering by way of the entrance-hall and leaving through the wide-open glass door to the stone terrace. In accordance with Tolstoi's will, his body was that evening buried in Stary Zakaz, on the edge of a ravine. It was here that, as a child, Tolstoi believed that the Green Wand was hidden. His brother Nikolai told him that the secret

* Lev Tolstoi, *Complete Works*, Vol. 83, p. 405.

how to free mankind of all sorrow and suffering was inscribed on the Wand.

The news of Tolstoi's death re-echoed throughout the world. Gorky wrote: "Lev Tolstoi is dead. There was a telegram stating in plain words: 'died.' I received a thrust to the heart and moaned with grief and pain, I was like one berserk. I see him before me as I used to see him. I long to speak about him. I see him in his coffin, lying there like a pebble at the bottom of a brook. At last his hands are folded quietly—his hard labour is past.

"I saw him once as, I believe, nobody ever saw him. I was going to him, at Gaspra, along the seashore and... on the brink of the shore, among the stones, I saw his small angular figure. And he seemed to me an old stone come to life, one who knows the beginning and end of all things. And the sea seemed part of his soul and all around him seemed to come from him. Words cannot describe what I felt at that moment, my soul was in ecstasy, yet gripped with fear, and then all gave place to the happy thought: 'I am not alone on this earth while this man is here.'

"And now I am quite alone, I write through my tears, and never in my life have I wept so hopelessly, so desperately, so bitterly."*

In 1910 Lenin wrote: "Lev Tolstoi is dead. His world significance as an artist and his world fame as a thinker and preacher, each in its own way, reflects the world significance of the Russian Revolution....

"Tolstoi the artist is known to an insignificant minority even in Russia. To make his great works really accessible to *all*, it is necessary to fight and fight against the social system which has condemned millions and tens of millions to ignorance, oppression, slavish toil and poverty; a socialist revolution is needed."**

* M. Gorky, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXII, Moscow and Leningrad State Publishers, 1933, pp. 74-75.

** V. I. Lenin, *Articles on Tolstoi*, Moscow 1953, pp. 16-17.

Excursionists at the Tolstoi home

The Russian proletariat, together with the working peasantry, under the leadership of the Communist Party brought about this socialist revolution in October 1917; since then the heritage of the great writer Lev Tolstoi has become accessible to all the working people.

Men and women of all professions come to Yasnaya Polyana from all parts of the Soviet Union and from abroad to pay their homage to Lev Tolstoi and see with their own eyes the surroundings in which he lived and created his wonderful works. There, every room, every object is a reminder of the great master of words. On leaving the museum, the visitor carries away the impression of simplicity and grandeur. The great Russian people are proud of having given the world the genius of Lev Tolstoi, whose works will live for centuries to come.

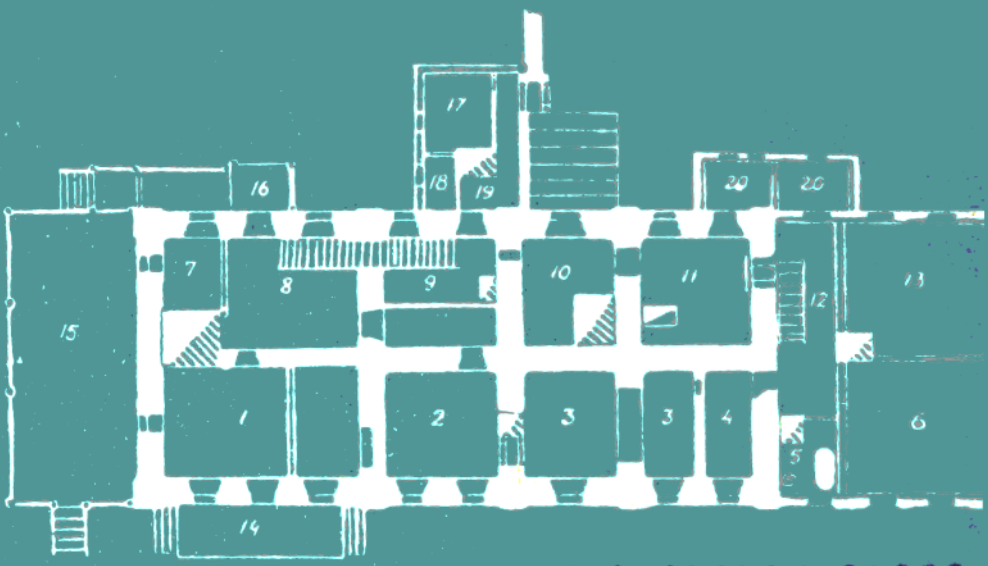
PLAN OF THE HOUSE IN ITS PRESENT STATE

(*Ground-Floor*)

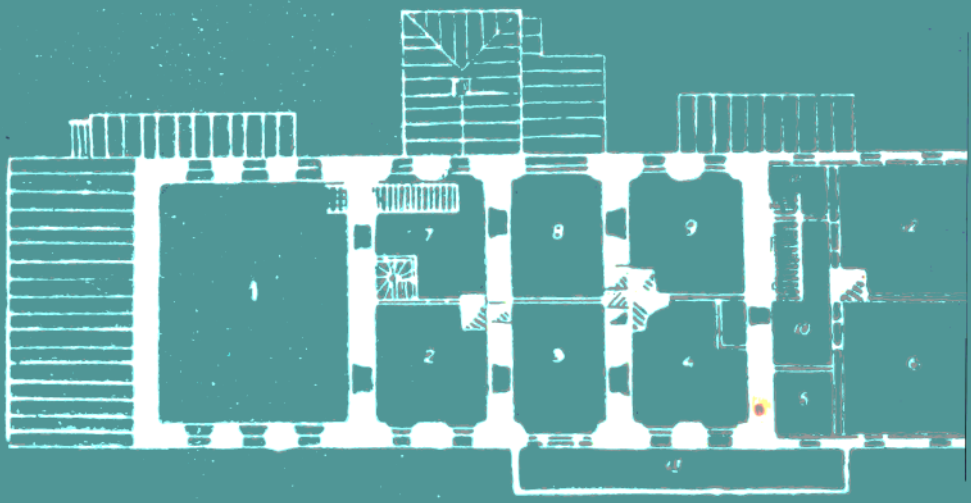
1. Former Study and Library
2. Doctor's Room
3. The Vaulted Room
4. Box-Room
5. Toilet
6. Guest-Room
7. Servants' Room
8. Entrance-Hall
9. Butler's Pantry
10. Oven-Room
11. Kitchen
12. Staircase
13. Maids' Room
14. Stone Terrace
15. Terrace
16. Steps
17. Larder
18. Toilet
19. Passage
20. Porch

(*First Floor*)

1. The "Hall"
2. Drawing-Room
3. Study
4. Tolstoi's Bedroom
5. Larder
6. The Bedroom of Tolstoi's Wife
7. Staircase
8. Library
9. The "Remington" Room
10. Staircase
11. Servants' Room
12. Guest-Room
13. Balcony



THE GROUND FLOOR



THE FIRST FLOOR

Plan of the House